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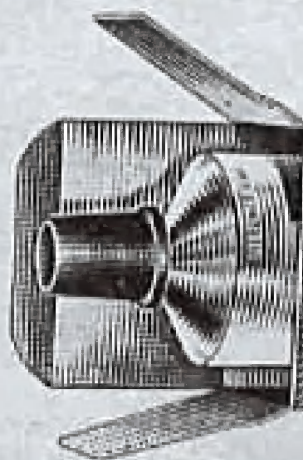
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for THE SAGA OF  
SRI JAGANNATH



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**Thoughts to be Treasured**  
Faith can achieve miracles while vanity and egotism brings about the destruction of man.

—Sri Ramakrishna

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# CHANDAMAMA

Controlling Editor: NAGI REDDI

Founder: CHAKRAPANI

## STORY OF RAMA

We are sure, our readers have enjoyed the *Saga of Sri Jagannath* as much as they had enjoyed the *Story of Krishna*. Hoary legends establish a mysterious link between Sri Jagannath and Krishna.

Next in the series will be the *Story of Rama*. The *Ramayana* was written before the *Mahabharata*. For centuries characters of Rama and Sita have widely influenced the Indian mind. In fact, the *Ramayana*'s stamp on the cultures of countries beyond India—on those of Indonesia, Siam and Kampuchea—is deep and profound. It is quite natural that our readers know much about the *Ramayana*. Even then it will be good to know the complete story, retold authentically, as originally told by the great Valmiki, our first poet.

## GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

उत्तमः क्लेशविशोभं क्षमः सोढुं न हीतरः ।

मनिरेव महासाणघर्षणं न तु मृत्कणः ॥

*Uttamah kleshavishobham kshamah sodhum na hitarah*

*Manireva mahasāṇagharsaṇam na tu mṛtkāṇaḥ*

It is only the best among men that can stand the attack of sorrows and suffering, not the ordinary people. It is only the gem which can stand the rubbing on a grindstone, not a clod of earth.

—The Subhasitaratnabhandagaram



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# NEWS FLASH

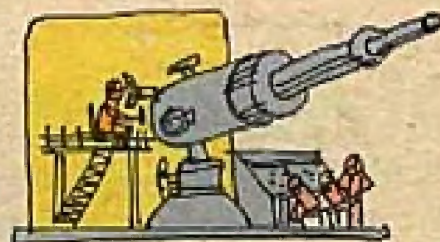


## The Talking Chimp

A 4-year old pygmy chimpanzee in Atlanta has shown remarkable capacity for understanding spoken English words. When he replies to questions, he does not really talk, but communicates by using geometric symbols representing words.

## The Largest Known Galaxy

Scientists at the Kitt Peak National Observatory Arizona, U.S.A. say they have spotted a super-cluster of galaxies that is believed to be the largest known entity in space. The cluster of galaxies is spread over a distance of one billion light years, said Mr. Jack Burns, a University of New Mexico astronomer. A light year is almost six trillion miles. The largest supercluster previously found was about 700-light year long and was reported in 1982 by Cornell University scientists.



## Talking Money!

A new device, which assists the blind to determine the value of money, is to be produced in Canada.

The report said that if tests over the next few months are successful, the blind may be "hearing" money talk in English and French, Canada's official languages.

## The Oldest Mummy

Some 8,000 years ago, there was a Chilean who commanded respect perhaps because he was a good hunter. When dead, he was made into a statue to be worshipped.

Today, archaeologists have unearthed the fallen idol and restored some of his former status. They believe it is mankind's oldest known mummy.









# The Saga Of SRI JAGANNATH

—By Manoj Das

*(Story so far: King Indradyumna sent his emissaries to look for some living Deity to adorn the temple he had built. One of the emissaries, Vidyapati, met Lalita, daughter of a tribal chief, Visvavasu, and married her. In Visvavasu's secret object of worship he felt the presence of Vishnu. He stole the object and brought it to the king at Puri. The king dreamt that a log will come floating in the sea from which the image of the Deity was to be carved. He traced the log, but it could not be brought ashore. They felt that it needed the touch of Visvavasu.)*

**F**rom the the top of the mountain the forest looked like rolling waves which had come to halt under some spell. The lush green trees covered a range of hills not too high. Between the hills spread sleepy tribal hamlets, the realm of Visvavasu.

It had been a quiet realm always, and since the previous

day it had grown even more quiet. That was natural. Their chief, Visvavasu, lay in swoon for most of the time. The chief's daughter, Lalita, wept continuously.

Nobody knew exactly what had happened. As usual, Visvavasu had gone out of his house at dawn. But that day he re-







turned soon, looking wild, panting and sweating. "What has your husband done?" That was all he could say, staring at Lalita at the foreyard of their house. Then he swooned away.

At first stupefied, Lalita cried in her horror and sat down by her father's side. Others came rushing to the spot. They carried their chief into his room and sprinkled water on his face. He recovered his senses, only to lose them again.

Lalita had instinctively understood what had happened. She had always a feeling that although Vidyapati loved her deeply, his readiness to live with

them in the forest was not entirely due to it. He was counting days for a chance to fulfil some other mission. Visvavasu's shock had only one meaning for Lalita: Vidyapati had escaped with their secret Deity for which he had evinced such keen interest.

The day passed and so did pass the night, without the father and the daughter touching food or going to sleep. The next morning Visvavasu walked towards the cave, in a daze, although he knew that the cave was empty. He was followed by his kinsmen.

Inside the cave he grasped the stone upon which his Deity used to be there and he refused to budge. Hours passed. Those who accompanied him did not know what to do.

And then someone came running at noon and told them excitedly that he had sighted a party of strangers atop the hill. The one who dominated the party looked like a king.

Soon another messenger reported of having sighted Vidyapati in the party.

By then everybody had come to know, through whispers, the cause of Visvavasu's sorrow.



"They have taken away our greatest possession. Are they not satisfied still and do they mean to plunder us? We will fight to the last man!" shouted a few voices.

But as more reports began to arrive, it became clear that the king's party carried no arms. The king himself had already told some people that he was coming to greet Visvavasu.

Visvavasu came out of the cave to receive the king, though he had not stopped weeping. The king, on sighting him, came running and embraced him.

"Visvavasu, I am the thief, not your son-in-law. Pardon me and listen to me with kindness,"

said the king. He then narrated how he got the inspiration to construct a magnificent temple, how he had had the feeling that somewhere, not far from Puri, there was a secret object of worship that must be gathered for the temple and how, of all his counsellors, Vidyapati alone had a feel for things divine.

"Visvavasu, for generations the Lord had been gracious to your dynasty. Now it is the Lord's wish that He should be available to all the seekers. In any case, He does not wish to be seen by others in the same form as you and your forefathers saw Him. What you worshipped will be kept inside a new image that







will be carved out of a block of log," said the king. He then told him how the log refused to come ashore and how he felt sure that it will come only if Visvavasu was there to receive it. The Lord knew in what a state of anguish his dear devotee, Visvavasu, was. The work cannot go on unless Visvavasu decided to lend his support to it.

Visvavasu heard the king with rapt attention. He was left in no doubt that what the king said was true. He sat silent for long. Then he stood up. "I am ready to follow you," he said.

The king embraced him again, tears of joy and grateful-

ness streaming down his cheeks.

"My daughter, do not misunderstand your husband. It is only for a lofty cause that he kept certain things secret from you," the king told Lalita who bowed to him.

"Lalita, I apologise to you. I will be back in no time and arrange for you to accompany me to Puri." Vidyapati said to Lalita who had not stopped weeping.

It was evening when the king and his party, along with Visvavasu, reached Puri. At once the king and Visvavasu set out into the sea in a boat. Lo and behold, as soon as they touched the floating log and gave it a push, it began moving towards the shore, dancing on the waves. Within minutes the jubilant crowd rolled it on to the sands and then it was carried to the castle.

What form will the Deity take? That was the question to bother the king next. He summoned the kingdom's leading craftsmen. They said that they were in the habit of carving images out of stone—following some established designs. They were not sure of their craftsmanship on a block of log,



particularly when it concerned the image of a Deity.

Before long an old man appeared before the king and claimed that he knew what to carve out of the log. He had been told in his dream that the Lord wished to be manifested as Krishna, along with his elder brother Balabhadra and their sister, Subhadra. At no other shrine was to be seen this trinity. This will be the exclusive feature of this divinely inspired temple.

The old man's claim carried conviction. The king agreed to his taking up the work.

"But I have a condition, O noble King. I must be left alone with the log and my instruments. The door of the house inside which I will work must remain closed until I have opened it," said the strange craftsman.

"What about your food?"

"I'll have it after my work is over," calmly stated the stranger.

The minister of the king was not sure that the stranger's mind was quite sound. But the king, surprisingly, agreed to his condition without any hesitation.



The stranger was given a house situated in the castle campus. The faint sound of his instruments fashioning the wood could be heard if one pressed one's ear against the door. And Queen Gundicha Devi, the consort of King Indradyumna, was never tired of doing that. Time and again, she would appear before the doors and listen to the sound and feel satisfied that the old craftsman went on with his work.

But one day all seemed quiet inside the house. The queen grew anxious about the stranger's condition. And when the sound did not resume the next



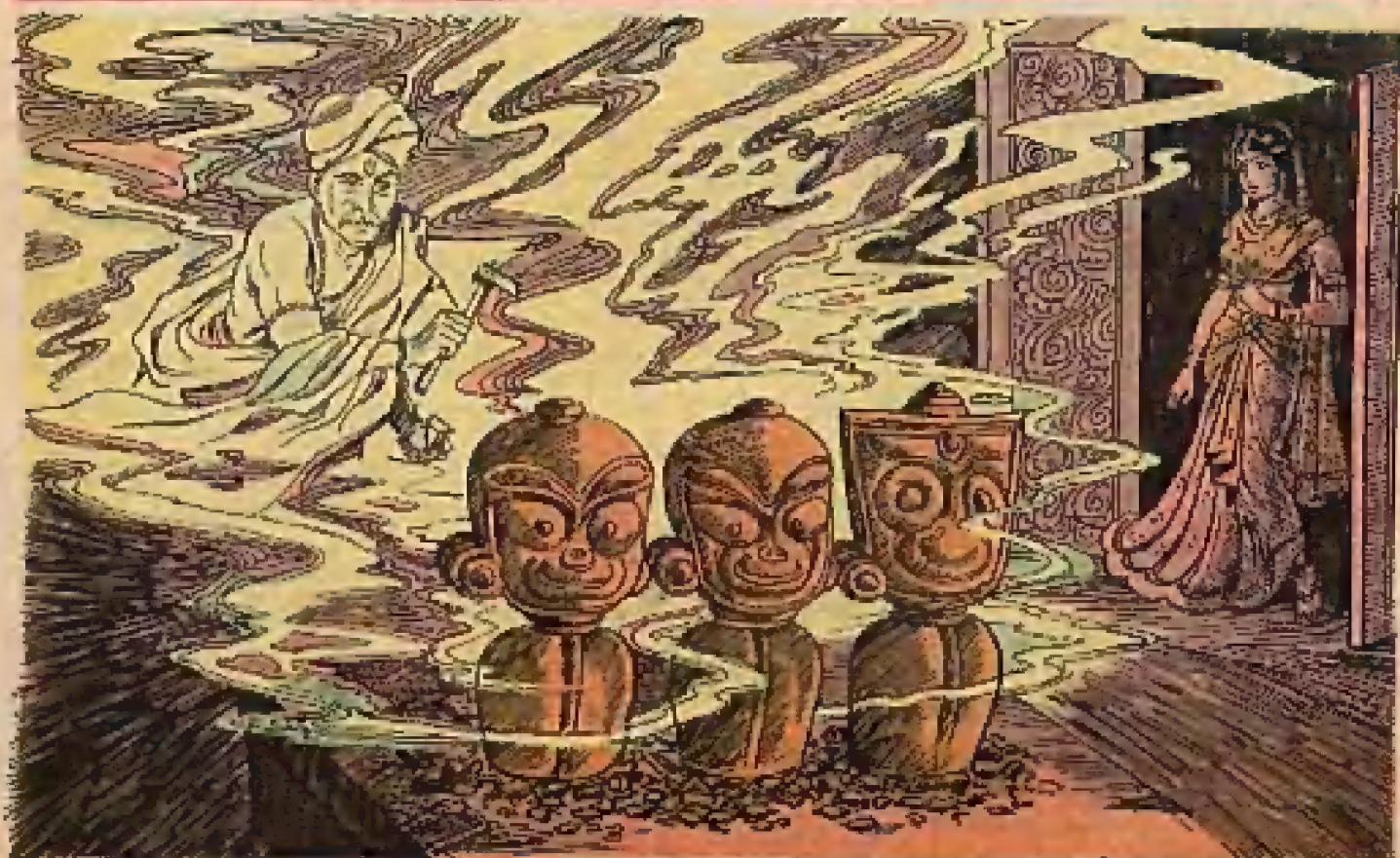
day or even the day after, she suspected that the old man who had deprived himself of food and drink, had died. She pressed open the doors.

The old man, busy with making the images, looked over his shoulder and then, in the twinkling of an eye, vanished. He had left the images incomplete. The images are to be found in the same shape—though from time to time new images took place of the old—to this day. The craftsman, as all concerned realised afterwards, was none other than Visvakarma, the sculptor and architect of heaven. Descendants of Vidyapati and Lalita are among the chief priests of

the temple.

But were the images really incomplete? They appear so. They even appear strange to the ordinary eye, but devotees see in them indescribable beauty and divine grandeur.

What Visvavasu worshipped was perhaps the sacred Relics of Krishna. The Relics are there hidden in the images. Ceremoniously, though secretly, they have been transferred into the new images through the ages. Sri Jagannath, the Lord of the Universe, is one of the prime Deities for the devotees of Vishnu and Puri has been a sacred place of pilgrimage since times immemorial.





# AMBA

*She carried her anguish to her next life*

**B**hishma, the heroic prince, had taken an oath not to marry. But he wanted his younger brother, Vichitravirya, to marry and continue the family line.

Out in search of a bride, he learnt of three beautiful sisters, the daughters of the King of Kashi. He brought all the three girls by force to his palace for his brother to marry them. That was when their Swayamvara, or a function in which they would have chosen their husbands from an assembly of princes, was being held.

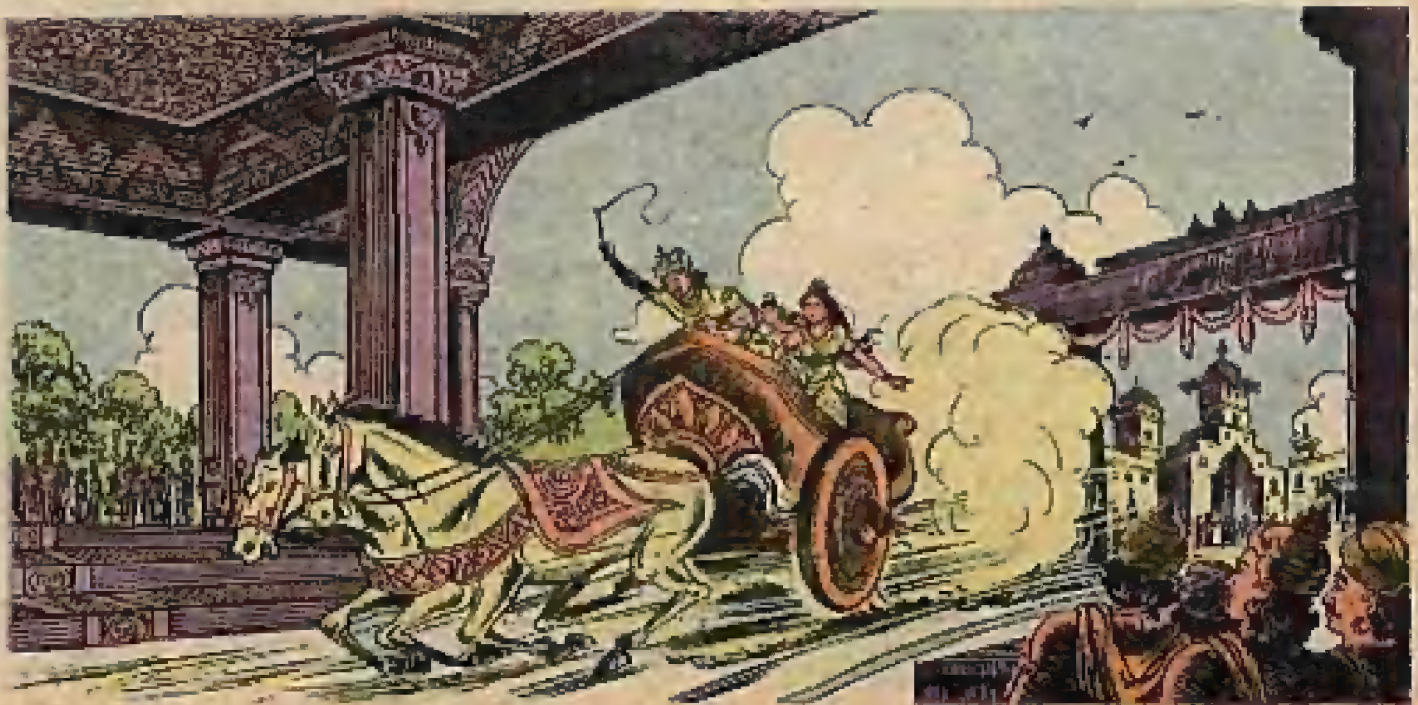
But the eldest of the three,

Amba, told him that she had set her heart upon King Shalwa. She was about to garland him when the Swayamvara was disrupted.

Bhishma respected her sentiment. He sent her, with escorts, to King Shalwa.

But a great shock awaited Amba. Shalwa refused to marry her. He had not been able to protect her from her abductors. If he accepted her now, it will be accepting a gift from his victorious adversary. That will be humiliating to him.

The disappointed Amba returned to Bhishma. "You





brought me by force, you must marry me," was her demand. Bhishma could not oblige her, for he was not prepared to break the oath he had taken.

Great was Princess Amba's wrath against Bhishma. "You foiled my marriage with Shalwa. You are not prepared to marry me. I must avenge this double insult!" she said and she reported the matter to Sage Parasurama. Parasurama tried to persuade and then force Bhishma to marry her, but in vain.

Amba plunged into penance and meditated on Shiva. The Lord gave her a boon as the result of which she, after her death, was born as the daughter

of King Drupad. Her father treated her as if she was a boy. She learnt warfare well. On the eve of the Mahabharata war, she borrowed from a yaksha his manhood. When Arjuna fought Bhishma, she, by then known as Shikhandi, stood in front of Arjuna, shielding him. Bhishma was under the solemn oath not to apply his weapon on women. He stopped fighting at Shikhandi's sight. Shikhandi discharged nine arrows and Bhishma fell. He was to breathe his last lying on a bed of arrows.

All the while Shikhandi remembered the shock of her previous life. She was at last satisfied that she had avenged her humiliation.







## THE MAN ON THE MOUNTAIN

**L**ong ago there lived a young man in a certain village. He was a sculptor. He sat on a hill and chiselled charming images out of boulders.

One day, as he sat working, he saw a procession passing by the hill. It was formed of men who accompanied a prince. The prince sat on an elephant. Bodyguards rode flanking the elephant. In front of the elephant walked musicians. Servants and soldiers walked behind the elephant.

"What a happy thing it is to become a prince!" he mumbled out to himself. Lo and behold!

He had become the prince the very next moment.

He was happy to find himself in a luxurious seat on the elephant. So many people were ready to obey his command. He felt proud. But his pride melted away when a hot sun beat down upon him. "My God! How powerful the sun is! It humbles even a prince. I wish I were the sun!" he thought.

Next moment he found himself as the sun. He was very happy. He shone brightly, until a patch of cloud came between him and the earth and did not



let his rays reach the earth.

"I see! The cloud is more powerful than the sun! I wish I were the cloud!" he said.

Indeed, he became the cloud. He rained to his satisfaction and floated in the wide sky. He felt proud to see sand-dunes melting away, plants and trees bending down as he poured on. But when he came over a hill, he found it unaffected despite his raining heavily.

"I wish I were the hill!" he said. And he became the hill.

He was very happy. He looked majestic.

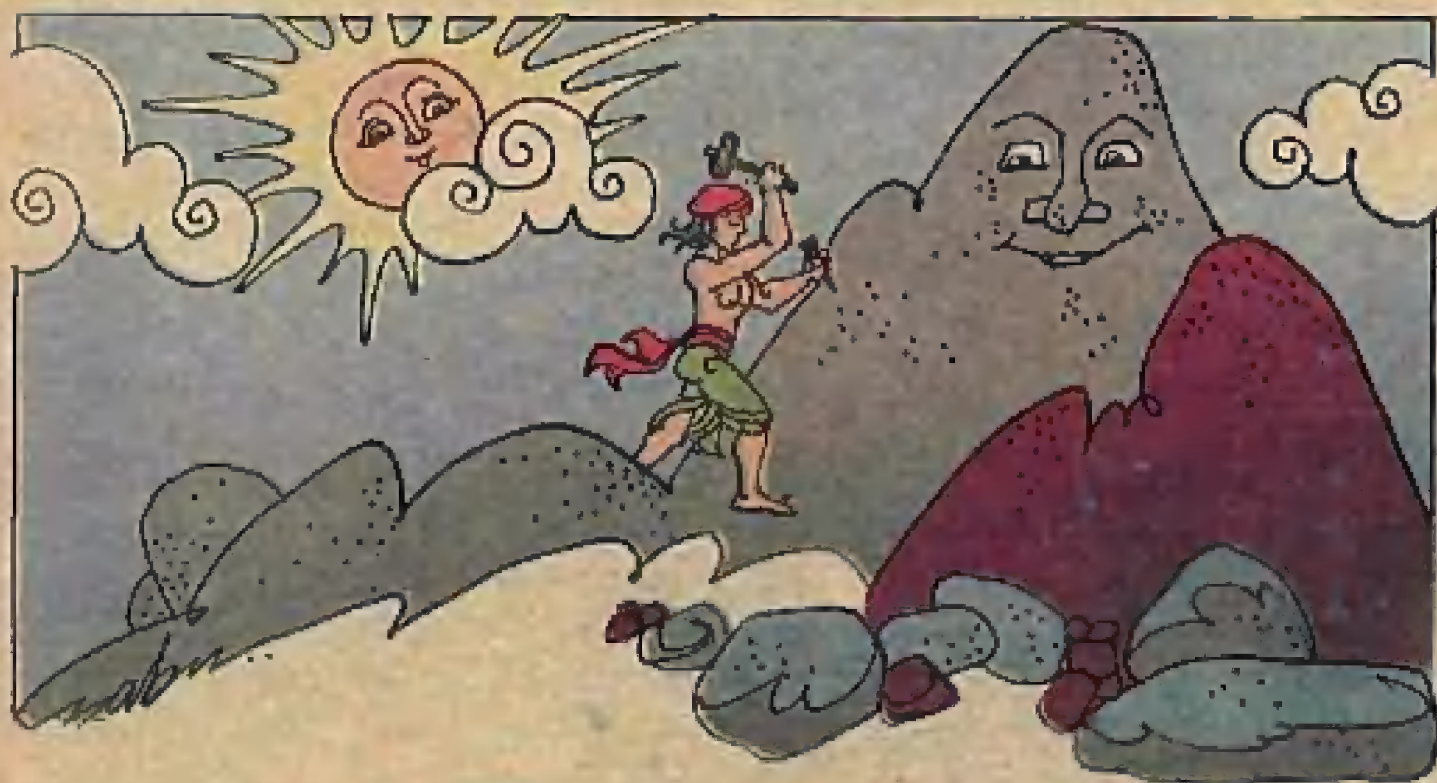
But soon a young man climbed the hill and began ham-

mering and chiselling a stone. A beautiful face began to emerge out of the stone.

"This young man is greater than the hill. What a hand he has — a hand that can bring such beauty out of hard stone!" he said.

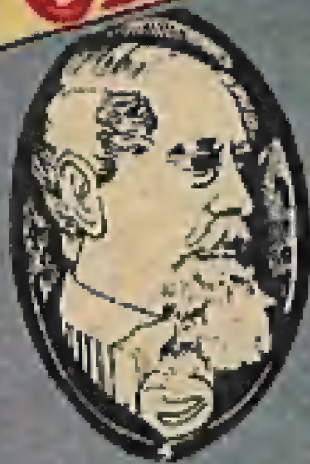
Next moment he found himself to be the very young man that he was! He had just dozed off and dreamed for a moment.

"God has made me man and I must do all I can with the strength and intelligence he has given me!" he told himself. He concentrated on his work and in a few years became a famous sculptor.





# Oliver Twist



Nursed back to health and cheer by the kindly Mr. Brownlow, Oliver goes on errand one day where he is kidnapped by Dodger and Sikes, of Fagin's gang. They drag him forcibly to where Fagin and Charley Bates, are.



"It's Oliver," said Fagin, emerging from the shadows. "Delighted to see you looking so well, my dear. And what a superfine cloth you are wearing. The Artful Dodger will give you another suit, for fear that you should spoil that Sunday one. But why didn't you write, my dear, and say you were coming?"



As Oliver stood there, trembling in front of Fagin, the Artful Dodger came forward and searched Oliver's pockets until he produced the five pound note that Mr. Brownlow had given him. "Hello, what's this?" enquired Sikes, stepping forward as Fagin seized the note. "That is mine Fagin". "No, my dear, said Fagin. "Mine Bill, Mine."

"Please don't take it," Oliver cried, falling at Fagin's feet. "It belongs to the kind gentleman who took me in his house and nursed me when I was ill. He gave it to me to pay for some books. Keep me here all my life, but return the money, or he'll think I stole it." Fagin replied: "He will think you stole it. So now he won't start asking questions about you. Dodger, show Oliver to bed!"







About noon the next day when the Dodger and Charley Bates had gone out to pick pockets, Mr. Fagin took the opportunity of reading Oliver a long lecture on the sin of ingratitude, of which he clearly demonstrated he had been guilty by willfully absenteeing himself from the society of his anxious friends. This was followed by various dark threats that made Oliver's blood run cold.

After he had kept Oliver in the house for a week, Fagin set out with him one damp windy night. The road they travelled was thick with mud and a black mist hung over the streets. As he glided stealthily along, the hideous old man seemed like some fearful reptile crawling forth at night in search of food.



Fagin hurried along several alleys until he came to one lighted by a single lamp at the far end. At a door of one of the houses in this alley, he knocked. "It's only me, Bill," Fagin said, as the door opened. "Come in," growled Sikes, leading him into a room where a young lady sat by the fire. "You know Nancy," Sikes said, remember "She thieves for me, you remember.





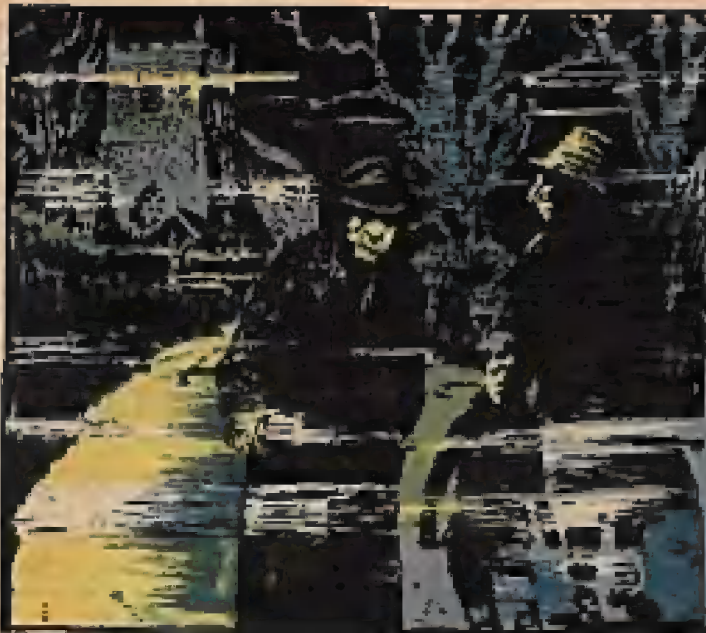
"I'm here about the burglary you have in mind," Fagin said in a low voice. "You need a boy, and I have the very one for you. With all the others I have, their looks convict them." Sikes looked at Oliver for a long while. "He'll do very nicely," he said. He then picked up a pistol and proceeded to load it. Suddenly he put it to Oliver's head. "If you speak a word without notice when you're out with me, I'll put this bullet in you." It was then that Oliver, nearly mad with terror, realised that he was being taken on a house-burglary expedition.

Sikes led Oliver into the darkness outside. For miles, it seemed to Oliver, he was dragged through street after street, until they came at last upon a solitary dwelling. The door yielded to Sikes' hand, and they were inside, where they found a man reposing on an old couch.



"Meet Toby Crackit," Sikes said. "And this is young Oliver who is going to help us." Toby rose to his feet. "Sit down by the fire, Oliver," he said. "Maybe we should start off by celebrating what lies ahead of us tonight with a drink." Toby then filled a wine glass. "Down with it, my young innocent boy."





Oliver tried to swallow the contents of the glass, only to fall into a violent fit of coughing. "Stop tormenting the young boy," Sikes said. "And let's be on our way." It was now intensely dark, and there was a thick fog outside as the three of them set off. They walked until they had cleared the town, by which time a church bell was striking two, with a solemn sound.

After walking another quarter of a mile, they came upon a house surrounded by a wall, to the top of which, Toby Crackit, scarcely pausing to take breath, climbed in a twinkling. "The boy next," said Toby. "Hoist him up. I'll catch hold of him."



Between them, the two men had Oliver over the wall in a trice. Oliver was then busied along to a little lattice window, which Toby opened with crowbar. "Now listen, young boy," Sikes whispered. "Go through the window and then find your way to the hall. When you reach the street door unfasten it and let us in."

*Continue*



## A CURSE AND A CURE

The king was on his death-bed. He looked lean and pale. He was neither too old nor affected by any deadly disease. Yet, he was unable to walk or eat. He could take only a little quantity of liquid food.

Physicians from all parts of the kingdom were consulted, but they were unable to diagnose the king's ailment.

One day a wandering sage visited the palace. People told the queen that he could do what physicians could not.

The queen prostrated before him and wept. She begged the sage to save her dying husband.

The sage consoled her and went with her to see the king. He examined him, and then meditated for a few minutes.

"He is not affected by any disease," said the sage. "This should be the result of a curse. Has he any enemy?"

"Enemy! Why! He has no friends at all!" said the queen. "He treated everyone with contempt. He didn't exempt me too







from the list of his foes!"

"And who do you think could have cursed him?" The sage shot his question.

"Anyone or every one could have cursed him!" said the queen. "To tell you the truth, my husband found harassing others great fun. Five years ago he announced that on every birthday of his the members of the nobility should be presented with a purse of one thousand silver coins, but in turn they must present him a purse of hundred gold coins. That will prove their capacity to change silver into gold!"

After a pause she continued:

"The nobility grudgingly responded. On the birthdays of the king the nobility stood in long queues burdened with bags of gold. Now you may understand, Sir, the plight of the nobility who were losing their wealth year after year. Needless to say that they cursed the king. I myself have heard them calling the king names. I have heard them tell one another: 'Can't someone kill the tyrant and make his birthday the day of his death—a day of joy?' How we struggle to save money for our future and this merciless fellow fills his treasury with our gold! Is Providence blind? I wish the king were beset with a killer disease!"

The queen heaved a sigh and stopped.

"The curse of the nobility has worked," concluded the sage. "The only way to save the king is to make the same people praise him. They should withdraw the curse and pray for his quick cure."

"Why should they do so?" wondered the queen.

"That is the question—and here is the answer." The sage whispered his solution into the queen's ear.



The next day the queen proclaimed that she would govern the country till the ailing king recovers his health.

The nobility was immensely pleased to hear the news. They also heard that the queen was going to alter the custom of giving birthday presents!

The much-awaited announcement was made at last.

One morning a circular went to the nobility which said: "The queen hereby orders the nobility to present her a bag of a thousand gold coins on every full-moon night. This practice will continue till the king has fully recovered"

The nobility was shocked to hear the order. They cursed their own fate of having such a cruel-hearted woman for their queen.

"We got back at least a bag of silver coins when the king ruled. But now! My God! And that too every month!" said one, extremely dejected.

Another murmured: "The king was noble at heart. He got a bag of gold and in turn gave us a bag of silver. This he did with the noble intention of making all of us work hard. But now we are ruined!

"Suppose the king dies! O God! The situation is unimagin-





able. The tyrant queen will turn into a tigress at heart," sneered another.

"We should not let the king die. The only way to save the king is to pray to God for his quick recovery," said an old noble in the hall where they had all met to discuss the problem.

The nobility of the whole country was engrossed in prayers.

The king recovered from his ailment. Before he was back to the throne the queen told him what happened during his illness. Further, she advised him to be kind towards all.

"But aren't the noblemen of

my court a pack of hounds? Don't they thrive on the wealth of poor people whom they exploit?" asked the king.

"Right, my lord. You must stop their doing that. You must make good rules to govern all," advised the queen.

The king who remained so far stone-deaf to all her pleadings, now accepted her advice, for, he felt grateful to her. He exempted the nobility from submitting the birthday gift, but, at the same time, made rules that would prevent their exploiting the poor.

—Retold by P. Raja





## PROVE ME A LIAR!

Some travellers fastened their camels to trees and settled down in the shade for taking food.



A tramp approached them and said, "Either you are mean or I am a damned liar!"



"We're not mean!" asserted the leader of the group of travellers.



"Good," said the tramp. "All you have to do now is to prove that I'm a liar, by giving me some food!"







## The Arabian Nights

### THE FELLOW WHO BECAME A DONKEY TWICE

**A**sif needed a donkey to carry on his business. He went to the weekly markets where animals were sold and looked for a good donkey. After examining a number of donkeys, he bought a handsome beast with a white spot on its forehead.

"This was the best donkey in the market," said several voices as Asif marched out of the market, dragging his donkey proudly.

A loafer who too knew that the donkey Asif bought was the finest one in the market, did not stop at merely appreciating it.

He followed Asif as quietly as possible, with another loafer,

his friend. Along the lonely road, he tiptoed behind Asif and unfastened the donkey. While his friend took hold of the donkey, he tied the rope around his own neck and walked on, stooping low.

"Good God, I had never seen a man being pulled liked this!" a traveller coming from the opposite direction remarked. That made Asif look back and what should he see but a human being in place of his donkey!

"What is this?" he stopped, gaping!

"You're surprised, aren't you? It happened like this. Getting drunk, I beat up my mother last week. In great anguish she cursed me and that changed me into a donkey. Just now, I'm sure, she repented for casting the curse on me and prayed to Allah to come to my rescue. Her prayer is granted and I'm a man again!" said the loafer.



"What an astonishing thing to happen! Never in my life had I seen a donkey changing into a man!" said Asif. He set the loafer free and gave him a bit of good advice: "You must not be harsh towards your mother, eh?"

"I will obey you, Sir, and thanks a lot for your kindness!" The loafer disappeared in no time.

Asif was back in the market the next week, for he must have a donkey after all!

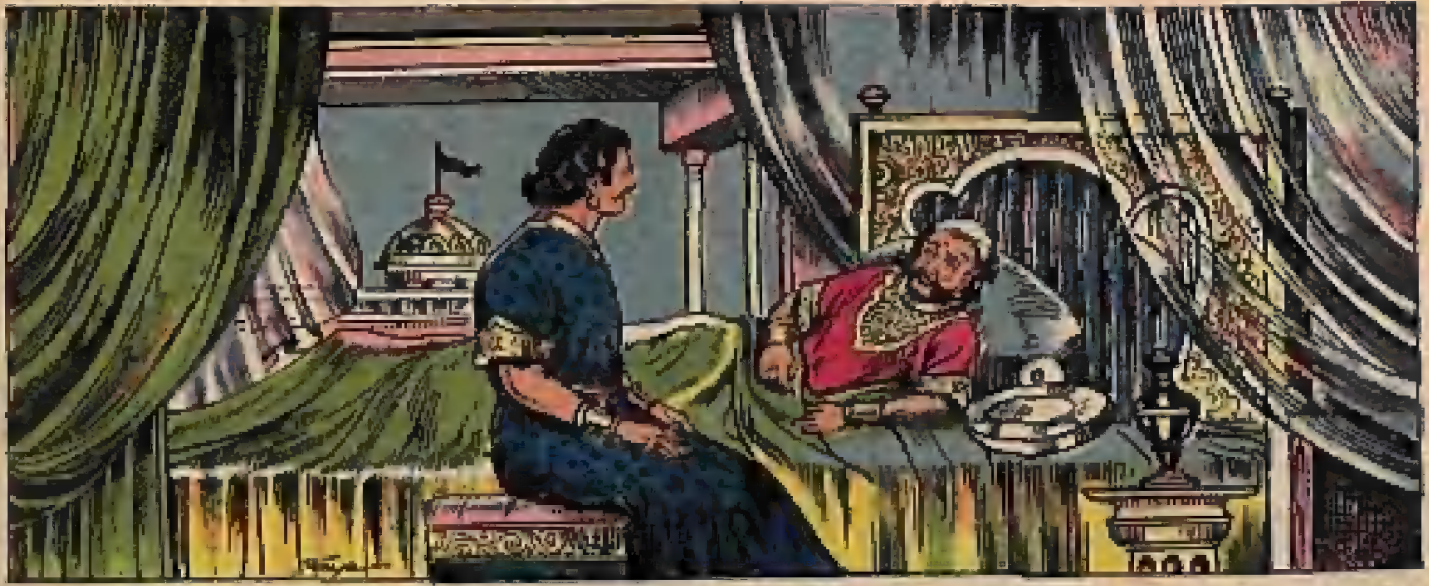
As he went looking for a good beast, his eyes fell on the donk-

ey he had bought and lost the previous week. He observed it for a while. The donkey nodded looking at him. Asif went closer and whispered to it, "I understand, you were naughty once again and your mother's curse turned you into a donkey. I also understand that you'll like me to buy you and set you free! But, you see, my friend, I cannot go on spending on you to no profit! I'm sorry!"

Asif walked away, murmuring to himself, "Whoever had seen a fellow who should become a donkey not once but twice!"







## DIRECTIONS FROM THE DEITY

**K**ing Dharampal, lying on his death-bed, summoned his only son, Prince Pulakesh.

"My son," he said, "before I leave this world, I want to tell you of a family secret which has been coming down for the past ten generations. It is about the deity, Dharmadevi. She dwells in a small temple in the eastern part of the forest. Whenever you have any problem regarding the kingdom, go to her and take her advice and follow it. She has kept our kingdom safe and prosperous for centuries."

A few weeks later, the king died and Prince Pulakesh was made the king. He ruled the kingdom with justice and soon came to be loved by his people.

A few years passed smoothly. One day, King Pulakesh faced a grave problem. His daughter Malini had fallen in love with the son of a subordinate ruler. She wanted to marry him, but her father did not like the proposal. The tradition was that the daughters of the dynasty were given in marriage only to princes of equally famous ruling families. At the same time, if King Pulakesh refused his permission then he would be hurting the feelings of Malini. So, unable to decide what to do, he went to seek the advice of Dharmadevi.

As he sat praying, the image of the deity grew luminous. He heard a voice, though not audi-





ble, "What are you first—a father or a king?"

"I was a father even before I became a king," replied King Pulakesh. He understood what the deity indicated—and returned satisfied.

Malini was happily given in marriage to the prince with whom she had fallen in love. The nobility and the people appreciated the king's decision.

Hardly a year had passed when another serious problem arose and King Pulakesh had to seek the deity's advice. His young son Devamitra, while practising sword-fighting, injured, by accident, the right

hand of his friend. The father of the injured boy approached the king and asked for justice. "As your son has cut my son's hand, I want you to permit me to cut his hand," said the agitated father.

King Pulakesh did not know what to say. He asked for a day's time before he could give his judgment.

He asked the deity for a solution. "I have to uphold the rule of justice. But can I allow the future king's hand to be maimed?"

"You have to maintain the justice at any cost," said Dharmadevi. "You can tell the man that as your son made a deep cut in the right hand of his friend, let the friend do the same with his right hand to your son."

The king announced the judgment next day. The accuser felt helpless, and yet, he saw sense in the king's judgment. He left the court quietly, because his son was in no position to wield a sword.

And again months passed without any problem.

One day, a neighbouring king visited King Pulakesh and stayed back as the king's guest for one week. During one of the



after-dinner entertainments, both the kings played a game of chess.

"The game will become more interesting if we put a bet," said the guest-king. "What will be the bet?"

"I pledge my ring," said King Pulakesh.

"Being kings we should pledge something bigger and greater. I pledge my kingdom. Do you have the courage to do so?" asked the guest-king.

It was a question of honour and King Pulakesh accepted the bet.

Unfortunately, King Pulakesh lost the game and he

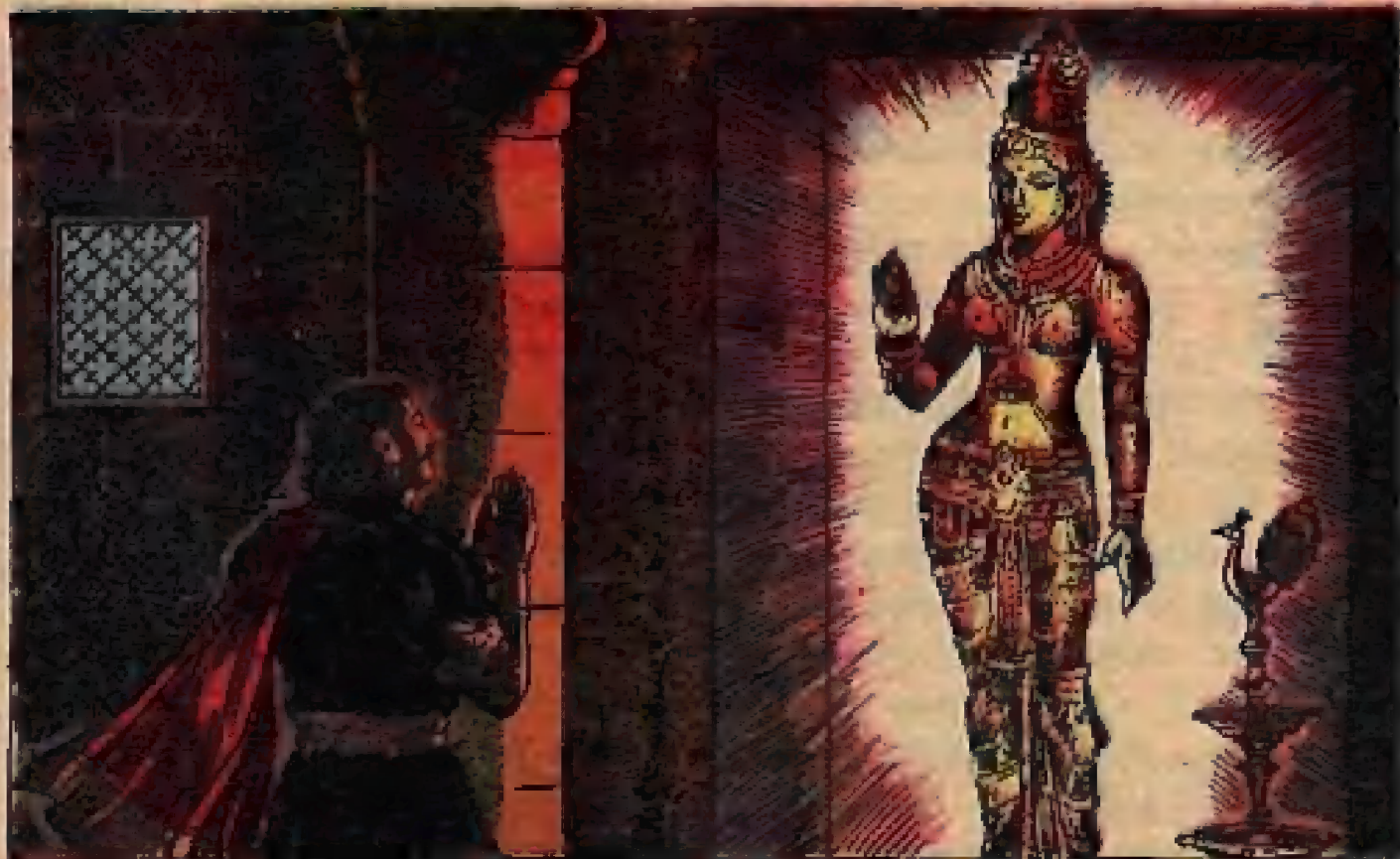
declared, "As I have lost the game, I have lost my kingdom to you."

"My dear King! I did not really mean to lose my kingdom or gain yours. Please keep your kingdom to yourself!" said the guest.

"No, I have put the bet in all seriousness. So, you must own my kingdom."

There was an argument between the two kings. King Pulakesh decided to seek Dharmadevi's advice.

Dharmadevi heard about the bet and then said, "King Pulakesh, you have no right to give away your kingdom, be-







cause it belongs not to you but to the people. You are only its custodian and not its owner. A kingdom is like a temple. A temple belongs to the deity, not to its builder."

The king returned to the palace. The very next day he crowned his son as the king. He passed on the secret of Dharmadevi to

his son and taking him along with him he went to the goddess to ask for forgiveness.

Thereafter he spent his days like a hermit in the forest. He knew that he had forfeited the right to rule a kingdom once he had taken part in a kind of gambling.

## WONDER WITH COLOURS





## THE THIEF IN THE NIGHT

**After dark, a farmyard raider goes on the prowl in North America.**

**W**HEN night falls, the North American raccoon sets off in search of its dinner. Raccoons, close relatives of the bear, are hunters of small birds, rats and frogs. They are also fond of all kinds of birds' eggs, and often thrust their long front paws into the holes of trees to take eggs from woodpeckers' nests. If there are no wild birds about, they will raid poultry farms to steal eggs and chickens. But at the slightest hint of danger, the raccoon rushes up the nearest tree, climbing at an amazing speed with its long, sharp claws.

An adult raccoon is about a metre long (including its tail). It was once the commonest of animals in America and could be found from Canada to Mexico. Then the frontiersman relentlessly hunted it for its fur.

Until quite recently, the raccoon was the most important fur-bearing animal in North America. Less than a century ago, much of the buying and selling in the Mississippi Valley was done by using raccoon skins instead of money.

The raccoon makes its home high in the hollow of a large tree. Sometimes it chooses a hollow log on the ground, or it may even take over a burrow made by some other animal.

Despite the fact that its feet are thin and have no webs, the raccoon is an expert swimmer and can dive into rivers at lightning speed to catch fish under water, grabbing them with its fore-paws.

Whatever it has caught, the raccoon always carries it to the nearest tree, where it sits up with its back to the trunk. It holds its meat between its hind paws, picking off pieces and carrying them to its mouth with its front paws. It always washes its food in a river or stream before eating it, even doing this with the fish it catches.

The female raccoon has a litter of five or six young which are born in the spring. As soon as they are able to walk and climb, the young go hunting at night with their parents. When they

are a year old, they go off to set up home on their own.

In the autumn, the raccoon looks for a really comfortable home and, immediately winter sets in, it hibernates. There it remains until the warm weather awakens it from its long sleep.

There is a larger species of raccoon native to South America. It has exceptionally powerful teeth. It uses these for crunching up the crabs which it catches and eats. It is called the crab-eating raccoon to distinguish it from its North American relative.

North American raccoons are becoming rare. With their taste for farmyard eggs, poultry and vegetables, the reduction in their numbers may be considered, by the American farmer at least, a blessing.









## THE GOLDEN PEACOCK

**L**ong long ago there was a dense forest near the city of Varanasi. Travellers who crossed the forest or wood-cutters who braved into it could see, once in a while, a strange peacock. It was dazzlingly golden. Unlike the ordinary peacock, it had a very sweet voice.

The report of the strange peacock reached the queen of Varanasi. She grew a strong desire to see it. "Can't you get me the golden peacock?" she asked the king.

"You'll have it before long," said the king with a smile of confidence. He summoned the best hunters of his kingdom. "Get me the golden peacock and you will be amply rewarded," he told them.

The hunters fanned out into the forest, but, even though sometimes they had a glimpse of the peacock, they could not trap it. Months passed.

The queen, yearning for the peacock, lost her peace of mind. She dreamt of the peacock time and again and fell sick.





"Get me the peacock even if you're to kill it!" ordered the king. Hunters grew active again. Months rolled away; the queen's sickness grew severe. But the hunters brought no report of success. At last, still yearning to possess the peacock, the queen breathed her last.

The king felt extremely sorry that he could not satisfy the queen's desire. His wrath fell on the peacock. Before his own death, he left this message for his subjects:

"In the forest lives a golden peacock. One who would eat its flesh will become immortal and his body will grow luminous!"

So many people went into the

forest and tried to capture the golden peacock. Some of them lost their lives to ferocious animals, some returned disheartened at their failure.

The prince who ascended the throne was determined to capture the peacock. He camped in the forest for months and, after long efforts, one day trapped the peacock.

He returned to the palace with the peacock. He marvelled at the bird's splendours.

"Prince, what do you propose to do with me?" asked the peacock.

The prince, surprised at the bird's speech, said, "Well, I will like to eat your flesh. That will





make me immortal."

The peacock laughed.

"Why do you laugh?" asked the prince.

"My dear prince, I am mortal myself. The fact that you will kill me, proves that I am not above death. How then can you become immortal by eating a mortal?" asked the peacock.

The prince had no answer to this. But he said, "I can at least become luminous like you by eating your flesh!"

The peacock laughed once again and said, "Do you imbibe the colour of anything you eat? Do you become yellow when you eat a ripe mango? My dear prince, my colour is due to the pious life I had when I was a king. That was long ago."

"Were you once a king?"

"Yes, and a king of Varanasi too!"

"Can you prove this to be true?" asked the curious prince.

"Dig at the northern-most corner of your garden. I buried there a bejewelled chariot that was mine!" said the peacock.

The prince dug the ground and found the chariot. He stood speechless for long. Then he bowed down to the peacock and requested him to stay with him.

The peacock lived in the royal garden and helped the king to lead a righteous life. The peacock was none other than the Bodhisattva—the soul that was to be born as Gautama Buddha.

—From the *Buddha Jatakas*.







## THE TREASURE-HUNT

**K**ing Nagaraj was not only old but he had lost his health and capacity to rule. Added to his ill-health were his worries regarding the chaotic state of his kingdom. Corruption and lawlessness had become widespread.

Taking advantage of the situation, the neighbouring king was planning to attack King Nagaraj's kingdom.

"I don't know what to do. I cannot rule the kingdom any longer," the king said again and again.

Prince Jaydeep had been to a far away country for his education. Having finished it he had just returned home.

One day, the chief minister advised the king, "Maharaj, now that our prince is back, we should make him the king and shift all your responsibilities to

him. I'm sure he'll be able to bring order and discipline in our people.

The king, however, was hesitant. He was not sure if his son, without any experience, will be able to steer his kingdom out of its present problems. After much thought, he finally decided to test his son's capacity to become a king.

The king summoned the prince and said, "My son, you know all about the sorry state of affairs in our kingdom. What do you suggest should be done to improve the situation?"

"Father," replied the prince, "the first thing to be done is to safeguard our kingdom from the neighbouring king who is preparing to attack us any time now."

"But, aren't the dangers within our own kingdom greater





than the threats from outside? Should we not look to our problems at home first?" asked the king.

"I'm well aware of the situation at home. True, there are thefts and robberies, but the wealth of the kingdom at least stays in and does not go out. One day, we could round up the thieves and return the stolen property to the owners. But, if we lose our kingdom to the enemy, then, we will not only lose all our wealth but also the kingdom! Hence, you should concentrate on fortifying our castle and strengthening our army," said Prince Jaydeep.

The king was happy listening to his son. He immediately issued orders that the main entrances into the castle should be doubly secured and strengthened.

The minister in charge of security made an estimate and reported to the king, "The fortification of the castle would cost us a fortune which we cannot afford at the moment."

Just then the commander of the army entered the court and said, "Maharaj, I have found a way to fill up our treasury. Two of my spies have reported of a yogi who has strange powers. He can see the hidden or buried wealth. Many of our people have been benefited by his powers. Perhaps, we too could ask him and see if we can find some hidden wealth!"

As the king was very anxious to find a solution to the financial problem of his kingdom, he asked, "Where does the yogi live? I would like to see him immediately."

The commander led him to the yogi's camp.

When the king told the yogi about his problems, the yogi concentrated for a while and then, opening his eyes, said,



"Your Highness, you need not fear any foreign invasion in the near future. There is no such danger. Regarding the question of hidden wealth, you are very fortunate, O King! Under the main gateway of the castle there are at least a hundred pots of coins. Demolish the gateway and discover them!" The king returned to his palace and with great joy told his son what he had just learnt from the yogi.

"Father, even if what the yogi has said is true, it would be most unwise to demolish the gateway of the castle at this moment when our enemies are waiting for an opportunity to attack us. Regarding the treasure, why should it be located under the gateway alone! Is there no wealth in any other part of our kingdom? *How very strange!* Father, I request you to give me one week's time before you take your final decision in the matter."

The king saw reason in his son's stand and granted him his request.

That evening, Prince Jaydeep called secretly the court jester and told him about his plans. Accordingly, the jester went to the yogi and with a sorrowful



face, said, "Swamiji, I have heard great praises about your powers. I am in an urgent need of a thousand silver coins which alone can enable me to perform my daughter's marriage and also *save my wife's life. I implore you to help me...*"

The yogi opened his eyes and said, "Now it is evening, and I do not grant any requests after sunset. Come tomorrow and I shall help you..."

When it was all dark and most of the people had retired, Prince Jaydeep and the jester hid themselves near the house of the jester. Soon, two men came stealthily and started digging





under a mango tree. The prince, to his surprise, saw that the two men were the two spies who had accompanied the commander to the court.

As soon as the two men left, the prince asked the jester to dig under the mango tree. They found a buried pot full of silver coins. They were two thousand!

Next morning, when the jester returned to the yogi, he said, "You fool, why do you worry for a mere thousand coins when you have two thousand with you? Go back and dig under the mango tree that is at the back of your house. You shall find more than what you need!"

The jester reported the matter to the prince. Then, both of them went to the king and told about all that happened in the last twenty-four hours. "I'm convinced that the yogi is none but a spy of our enemy king. And, the commander is hand in glove with him. They should be punished immediately," said the agitated prince.

The king was still unwilling to suspect his commander. "I believe in what all you have said, But, the commander has been extremely loyal to me and it is difficult for me to believe that he is plotting against me," said the king.

"In that case, let us disguise ourselves and hide near the residence of the yogi. You'll see for yourself the nature of your loyal commander!"

That night the king, the prince and ten strong armed soldiers hid near the yogi's house. Towards midnight, they were shocked to see the commander of the army and the two spies entering the room of the yogi.

"Commander, have I performed my role all right?" asked the yogi, gleefully.

"Yes, dear friend. Our game





has paid off and soon we shall be amply rewarded by your noble king. This morning the jester found the silver coins under the mango tree and as we had planned, it has confirmed the king's faith in you. In any case, we won't be required to play this game for long. Ha! Ha!"

And everyone in the room laughed and laughed.

But, not for long.

Hardly had their laughter stopped when the soldiers burst into the room and pounced

upon the gang of four.

They were thrown into gaol.

Next day, King Nagaraj called his chief minister and said, "Arrange for the coronation of my son. He is indeed wise and I am convinced that he will be able to pilot well my kingdom, even though he has to pass in the beginning through rough weather."

Prince Jaydeep fulfilled his father's wishes when he became the king. Soon, there was order and discipline in the people and the old king died happy and satisfied.

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# A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE

Vir Mishra was an astrologer. He could read horoscopes and, what is more, could locate lost or stolen goods. He charged two rupees for his service from each client. This was fifty years ago.

One day Mishra was returning home from a distant village. He lay down on the verandah of a rest-house. His umbrella was lying near him.

When he woke up after his nap, his umbrella was missing. He went to the manager of the rest house and complained about it.

"Sir, you are a renowned astrologer. Why don't you try to locate the lost umbrella through your calculation?" asked the manager.

"Look here, young man, I charge two rupees for any such calculation. My old umbrella is worth one rupee only. Who will pay me my fee? Will you pay it?" asked Mishra haughtily.







New Tales of King  
Vikram and the Vampire

## THE TANTRIK AND THE STRANGER

**D**ark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. At intervals of thunderclaps and moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He returned to the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, are you sure that somebody is not planning to get some work done by you and then to discard you? You should guard yourself against such possibilities. Let me give you an example to illustrate my point. Pay attention to my story. That might bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: Bhimpu, the tantrik, had just crossed into the kingdom of Vidyapuri, after creating panic in the neigh-





bouring state. He was capable of putting an end to anybody's life or could reduce a whole village to ashes by his power of black magic.

Entering Vidyapuri, he sat relaxing under a banyan tree. It was noon, the time when he performed some magic rite. As he finished with it and got up, he saw a stranger coming towards him. From the stranger's dress it was obvious that he too was a tantrik.

"Do you happen to be Bhimpu?" asked the stranger, in a tone that was not particularly respectful.

"Yes, indeed, I'm Bhimpu-

var, the greatest tantrik in the world. Who are you?" asked Bhimpu, rather annoyed.

The stranger laughed. "Haven't you heard of Purnachandra, who too could claim to be the greatest tantrik in the world? Well, your guru, Vichakshan, was my friend. I'm sure, you have managed to get hold of Vichakshan's talisman by which you can do miracles. Very well. But why are you here?" asked the stranger.

Bhimpu gave a start. He looked at the talisman hanging from his neck. His movement brought a smile to the stranger's lips.

Bhimpu had heard much of Purnachandra, who was a great friend of his guru. It was not possible to hide from Purnachandra the fact that he had grown powerful by the virtue of his guru's talisman. He was under the impression that Purnachandra was dead. He was not happy to find him alive!

"Why? Is it forbidden for me to come here? But I thought that you were no more!" said Bhimpu.

"Yes, I had spread the rumour about my death deliberately. I did not wish anybody to



look for me or disturb me while I was absorbed in mustering some new powers," said the stranger. "Well," he then asked Bhimpu, "how much power do you have? What can you do?"

"Better ask me what I cannot do! I can do anything I wish to do. I can burn down a locality!"

"Really? If that is true, I must admit that you are a worthy disciple of my friend Vichakshan. But can you really burn down a locality?"

"Why a locality? I can even destroy all the green fields and vegetation in the whole kingdom!"

"For your information, I can restore the vegetation and crops

to life in no time," quietly said the stranger.

"So what? I can destroy them once again. I can make the river swell with flood and bring about a deluge!"

"Impressive indeed! But can you bring down rains at will?" asked the stranger.

"Of course, I can!"

"I see!" the stranger said thoughtfully, "Let me be frank with you. It is not proper for two powerful tantriks to live in one kingdom at the same time. We should avoid unnecessary rivalry. If you will give me a proof of your power, I will leave this land, after advising the king that he should honour you!"





Bhimpu's face brightened up. He wished Purnachandra to leave Vidyapuri as soon as possible. People will not be much impressed by him if another powerful tantrik was present amidst them.

"What proof do you want?" he asked.

"Follow me!" said the stranger. He led him to a rocky place and said, "Come on, let me see you bring down rains!"

Bhimpu put his left hand on the talisman and waved his right hand in a circle looking at the sky. In a few minutes clouds began to gather. In half an hour it rained. Bhimpu and the stranger took shelter in a deserted

temple.

It rained heavily for an hour. "Now, I can stop rains, but I should not apply my power on your action. That will be like contesting you."

Bhimpu laughed and said, "You're very clever! You are not yet convinced of my power. You want to see whether I can stop the rains or not! Look here!"

Bhimpu touched the talisman once again and muttered some hymn. It stopped raining.

"Fine. Come, let us visit the king's palace. It is not far," suggested the stranger.

"Why? How do I care for that?"





"Listen to me, Bhimpu, the king thinks that I am the only tantrik of any worth. That is why he is not willing to let me go on a pilgrimage to the temple of Goddess Kamaksha, the presiding deity of Tantra. Once he comes to know you, he will understand that there is at least one other great tantrik in the world. Besides, who can honour you but the king?" said the stranger.

Bhimpu nodded.

Both reached the palace. The princess lay sick for long. Physicians had failed to cure her. The stranger led Bhimpu into the apartment of the princess. He cured the princess in no time.

The stranger then escorted Bhimpu to the king's presence.

"Bhimpu, can you read others' minds?" asked the stranger.

The question was unexpected. Bhimpu, a bit surprised, said, "Yes, I can, if I try to."

"Why don't you try to understand what is in my mind just now?"

Bhimpu kept one hand on his talisman and closed his eyes. Suddenly his face grew red. When he opened his eyes, they seemed to be giving out sparks



of fire. "You rogue! You are not Tantrik Purnachandra. Your only motive is to get rid of me. You ..."

Bhimpu put his hand once again on the talisman. But before he had said anything more, four court guards pounced on him and the stranger himself stepped forward and snatched the talisman from Bhimpu's chest.

"You fool! What can you do with that talisman? Do you think that it will work without *mantra*?" shouted out Bhimpu.

"It need not work!" said the stranger. He then dashed it to the ground. It got shattered.



"Throw this fellow out of our kingdom!" ordered the king. He said sternly, looking at Bhimpu, "You shall be put to death if you try to enter our kingdom again!"

The guards dragged Bhimpu away.

The vampire fell silent. After a moment he asked in a challenging tone, "O King, why was such injustice done to Bhimpu? He brought rain to a region where it was most needed. He cured the sick princess. Instead of rewarding him for his good deeds, how could the king order his expulsion from the kingdom? Who was that stranger? Why did he destroy Bhimpu's talisman? Answer me, O King, if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck."

King Vikram replied forth-

with: "The stranger was none other than the king's minister in disguise. The king's and the minister's conduct towards Bhimpu was dictated by their concern for their kingdom. It is true that Bhimpu did something good, but that was not because he was inclined to do good. The minister, through his cleverness, made him do these things. The king and the minister knew what he had done in the neighbouring kingdom. Left to himself, Bhimpu would do more harm than good. The minister knew that Bhimpu's source of strength was the talisman. He destroyed it, because he could not have put it to any use. At the same time Bhimpu has to be deprived of it."

No sooner had the king concluded his answer than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.







## Temples of India

### **MOTHER MEENAKSHI'S SHRINE AT MADURAI**

Once on a visit to the Earth, Indra the King of gods was passing through a forest. He sat down on a peaceful spot and meditated on Lord Siva. He left the forest soon, but he left it sanctified.

Once a king on a hunting expedition in the forest, felt no zeal for hunting. Instead, he felt a great peace and devotion for the Lord in his heart. He wondered if he should not shift his capital to that place.



At night the king dreamt that nectar is being sprinkled on the forest. He also felt that it was Lord Siva who sprinkled the nectar. In the morning he announced that he will shift his capital into the forest which will be named Madhurapura, the city of nectar.





Long afterwards a daughter was born to a king. She was exceptionally beautiful and her eyes were as well-cut as the shape of fish. She was named Meenakshi, Meena meaning fish and Akshi meaning the eye. The king had no other issue but Meenakshi.

Princess Meenakshi excelled all in courage and in the art of fighting. When she came of age, her father made her sit on the throne. Soon the king died. Princess Meenakshi ruled the kingdom in an ideal manner. Her capital, Madhurapura, had come to be known as Madurai.



The neighbouring kings were terribly envious of Princess Meenakshi. They in their vanity thought that a woman would not make a good ruler. But now everybody sang Princess Meenakshi's glory. The kings conspired among themselves and attacked Madurai.



Princess Meenakshi led her army into the enemy horde, herself pushing through them like a string of lightning. The insolent kings were cut down by her flashing sword before they had any time to raise theirs! Their soldiers fled like flies swept in a strong wind.

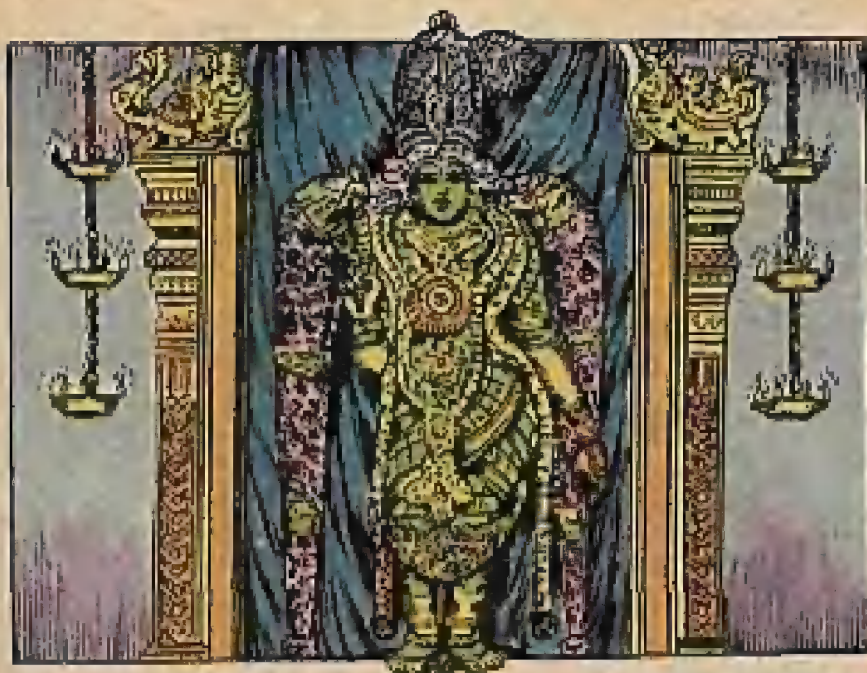


She did not know when she had crossed the battleground after repelling the invaders. Suddenly, near the forest at the border of her capital, she pulled the reins of her horse because she saw a stranger before her, the sight of whom dazzled her eyes.

The stranger was none other than Lord Siva. And the princess realised at His sight that She was an incarnation of Goddess Parvati. It was so ordained that they will meet there. Soon Princess Meenakshi married Lord Siva who came to be known as Sundareswara.

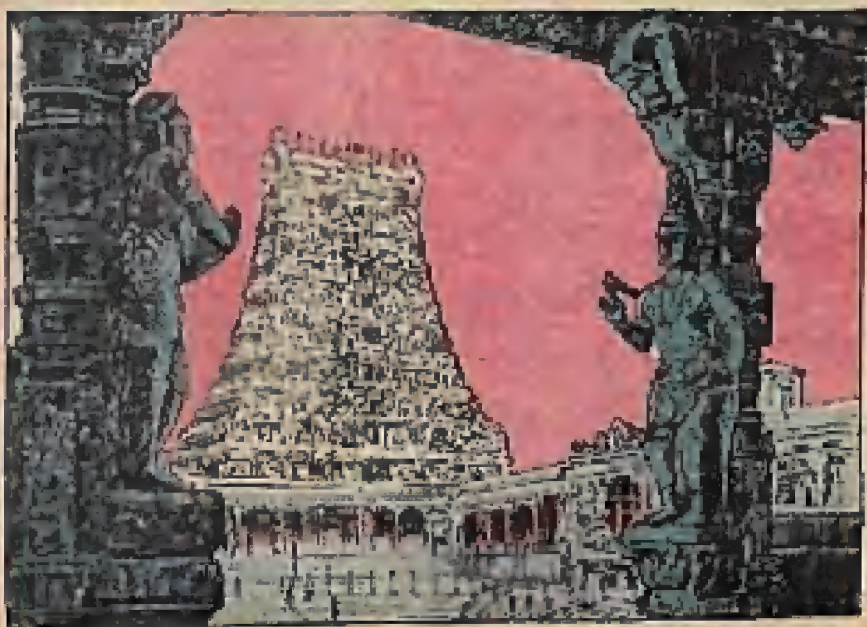






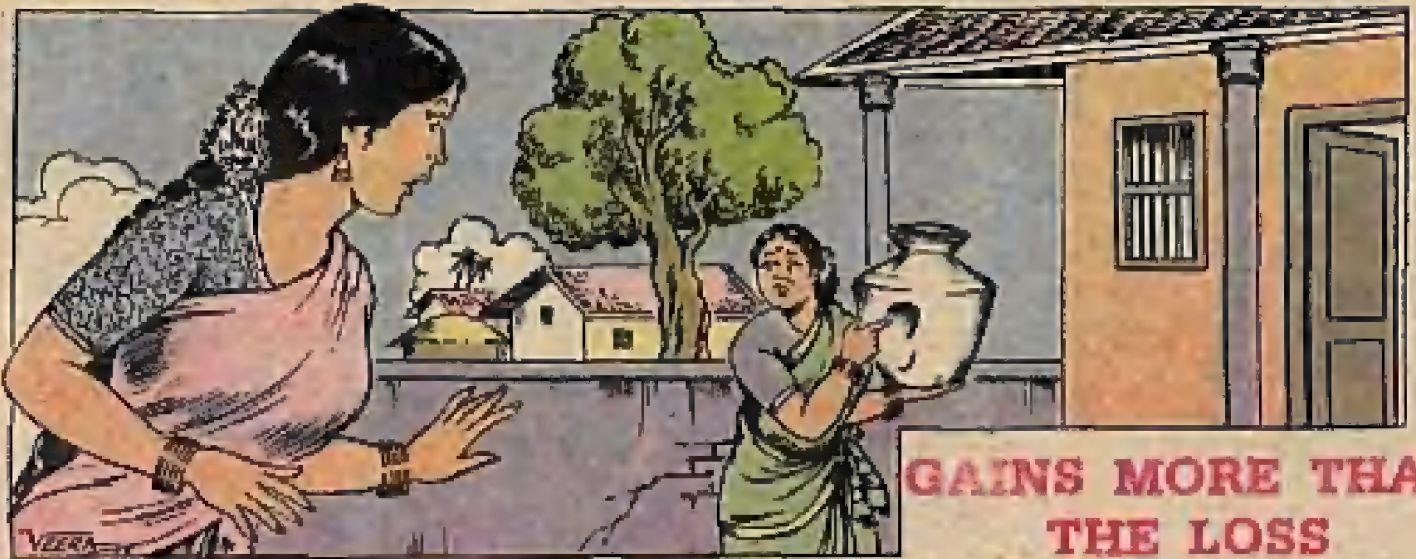
Realising that Princess Meenakshi was Mother Parvati, the people of Madurai worshipped Her. When she was no more in Her body, the devotees worshipped Her in Her image. The image of Lord Sundareswara too was placed in a shrine by the side of Hers.

The temple of Madurai is not only a great temple, but also is a monument remarkable for its sculpture and splendour. It has ten gopurams. The southern gopuram, forty-six metres high, is the tallest of all. The temple halls have thousand pillars.



Madurai, one of the oldest living cities in India and in the world, has the temple of Goddess Meenakshi at its centre. It attracts pilgrims in large numbers throughout the year. The temple hums with serene music and prayers of devotees.





## GAINS MORE THAN THE LOSS

**S**urendra was a handsome young businessman. When he brought home his charming wife, Anjali, his father Virendra called her one day and advised, "Listen, Anjali, Sitaben, your mother-in-law, is a bit short-tempered. I would like you to do whatever she asks you to do—otherwise there may be great disharmony at home. Take it as my advice and my request to you."

"Surely, Father, I shall follow your advice," said the shy bride.

As days passed, Anjali learnt the ways of her husband's family and worked hard to maintain peace in the house. She showed immense tolerance and patience toward her mother-in-law. She tried her best to follow her dictates.

One day Anjali got late in

returning home, fetching water from the well. Sitaben became angry and shouted at her: "If you take all the time in fetching water, when will you finish cleaning the vessels?"

Anjali was unnerved at her anger and her hands trembled... And she dropped the vessel. It got badly damaged.

Just as Sitaben was about to shout at her again, Virendra, who was watching them from the verandah, came out and told Sitaben, "Don't you see the girl trembling in fear of you? Do not scold her anymore!"

Another day, Anjali took out the bottle of ghee and was about to serve her father-in-law when Sitaben said angrily, "Foolish girl! Don't you know that you should first heat up the ghee before serving it?"





Anjali again trembled in fear and her unsteady hand dropped the bottle!

"Oh God! My ghee! That was the costliest ghee in the market!" wailed Sitaben. Then she began shouting at her. But Virendra took pity on Anjali and asked his wife to control her tongue.

A few days later, Anjali was pulling out a bucket of water from the well. Suddenly, Sitaben appeared behind her and shouted: "Have you forgotten the cooking pot on the oven? What a stupid girl are you, Anjali!"

And once again, out of fear,

Anjali dropped the bucket into the well. Virendra, lowering a hook into the well, brought out the bucket.

Every day, something or the other happened and there was something or the other that was broken or damaged. Not only was Sitaben at the end of her wits but Virendra too got annoyed with Anjali. One day he called her up and admonished, "Anjali, what is this happening in the house? Must you go on smashing things at this rate? Can't you control yourself?"

"Father, it is not that I can't control myself. I can. But, when someone scolds me I get unnerved and then I can't control my hands. They start trembling and I drop whatever I'm holding."

Virendra advised his wife, "Enough has been damaged at home. It is better that you control your anger or we will run a household of all broken things!"

Of course, Sitaben did not like her husband advising her in front of the daughter-in-law and in a fit of anger, she quit the room.

A couple of days later, a



neighbour visited Sitaben. As they were busy talking, Anjali was asked to prepare coffee for them. Unfortunately, there was some delay in preparing it. When she entered the room where her mother-in-law was chatting with her friend, Sitaben again lost her temper and said, "Anjali, you're really incorrigible! Can't you even..."

And there fell the tray with the cups of coffee!

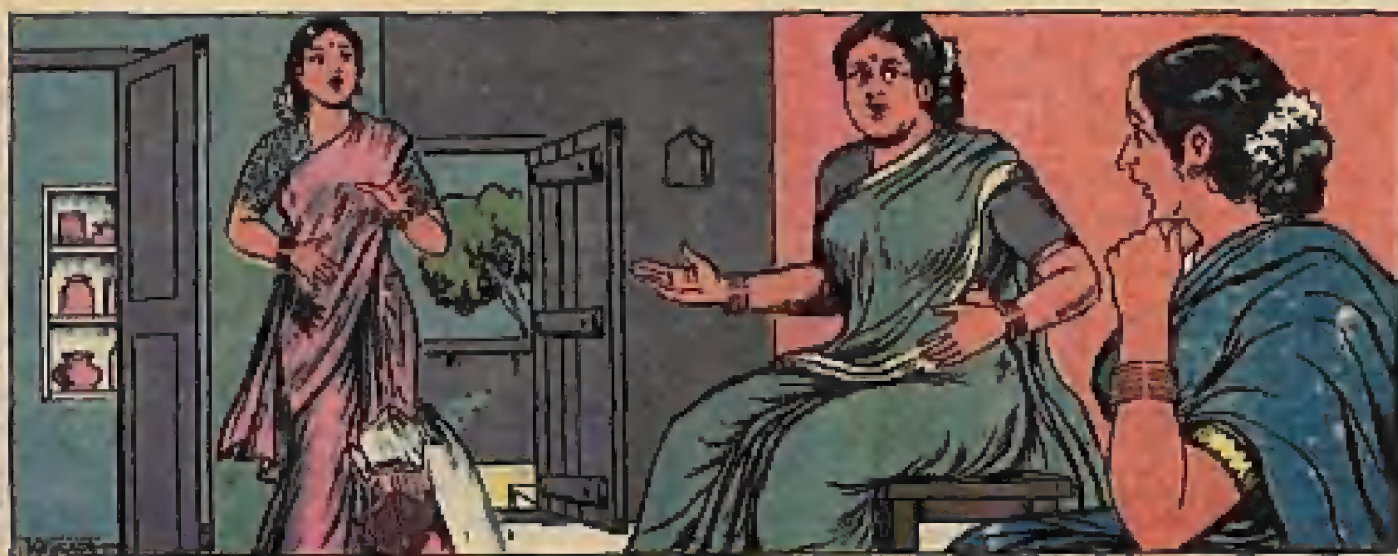
"Sister," said Sitaben, "I'm really fed up with my daughter-in-law! I don't know what to do with her. No amount of scolding has taught her any manners!"

"I understand you, Sitaben. But, you see, when a daughter-in-law goes to a new house, she is very nervous and timid. So it is the mother-in-law who has to be patient and loving. The only

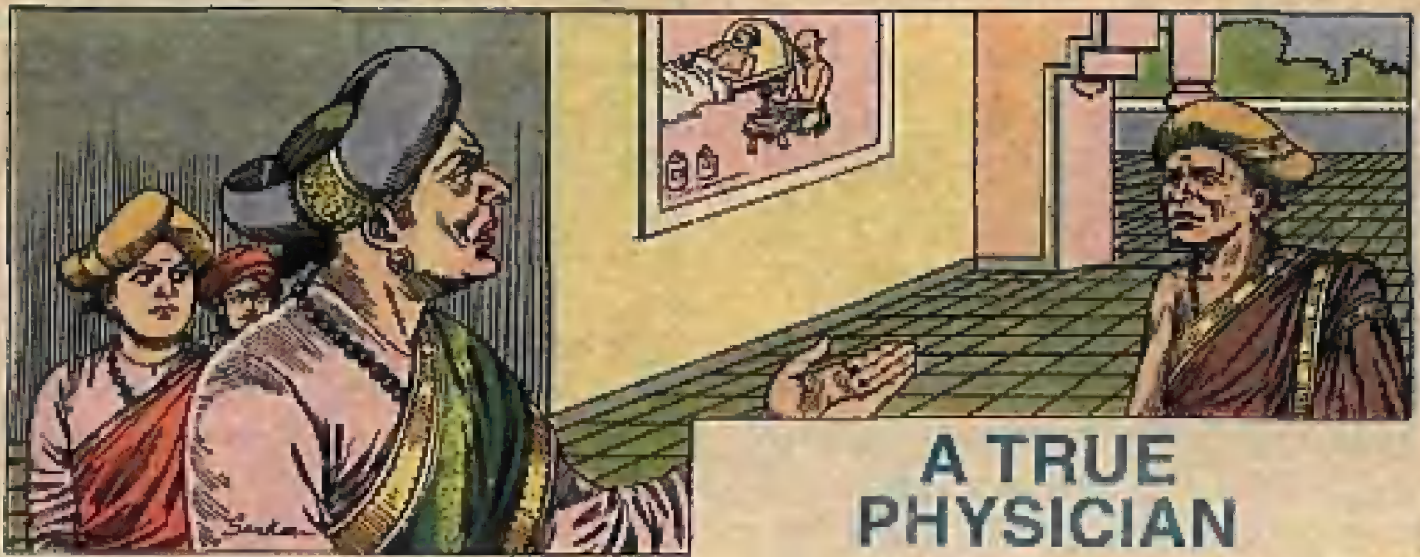
way to save your things in fact is to stop shouting at Anjali and to treat her with love and understanding," explained the neighbour.

Sitaben nodded. Slowly, within a few weeks, she calmed down. She showed great patience and tolerance in her dealings with Anjali as well as everyone else at home. Virendra was happy at heart that Anjali succeeded in changing his wife.

And of course, Surendra was most happy because his and Anjali's plan to teach a lesson to Sitaben had succeeded beyond their expectation. "When we look at the gain—change in Sitaben's nature and peace at home—the price paid was not so high. A few household utensils broken, that is all!" said Surendra to his wife.







## A TRUE PHYSICIAN

The king had contacted a strange skin disease. There were white patches all over his body and he could not come to the court and face his courtiers.

All the famous physicians of his kingdom took their turn in trying to cure the king, but in vain. The king was at first very angry with them, but later he thought that the disease was incurable, and that he was fated to live with it.

After a few months, the common people also came to know of the strange disease.

There was in the kingdom, a poor physician, named Vijayvanu who gathered all the information regarding the king's disease. He then went through all his books on medicine and ultimately prepared a lotion which he wanted to try on the king. He came to the capital and met

the Court-Physician. Because, according to the custom, no physician could treat the king without the Court-Physician's approval.

The Court Physician gave him a hearing, but he looked unhappy. He realised that the lotion that Vijayvanu had prepared had good chances of curing the king and he thought, "If this fellow succeeds in curing the king, who knows, if the king will not make him the Court Physician?"

"We spent fifteen years at the gurukul studying all the ancient books on medicine. And still, we have not been able to cure the king's disease. How can you, a rustic quack dream of curing the king? Moreover, if we allow you to treat the king, and if anything goes wrong, we'll be held responsible. So,



good-bye. Do not think of ever coming back!"

Vijayvanu returned home, but all the while he thought of the king and the disease. Once every week he went to the palace with a hope of getting permission to see the king. But, each time he was insulted and sent away.

One day, as he was returning home, he saw on the verandah of a rest-house, a mendicant who suffered from the very skin-disease with which the king was afflicted. Vijayvanu was happy that he could use the medicine he had prepared at least on someone. He took the beggar to his house and gave him the treatment.

At the end of three weeks, the beggar was cured of his disease and was back in the town.

One day, as the king was passing by the rest house, he saw the beggar and asked his bodyguard, "Is he not the same person who was suffering from a skin disease?"

"Yes my lord, he is the same beggar," replied the bodyguard.

The beggar was called.

"Who has cured you of your skin-disease?" asked the king.



The beggar told the king all about Vijayvanu.

That same evening, the king disguised himself as a merchant and went to see Vijayvanu. The physician gave the king his lotion to be applied on the skin. Every evening the king came in disguise and took the treatment.

On the thirtieth day the king was completely cured of his disease. He thanked the physician and gave him a bag of gold coins in gratitude.

"I am happy to have cured you, but what a pity that I cannot cure our king of the same disease!" Vijayvanu said with a sigh.



"Why? What stops you from curing the king?" asked the king, very curious.

Vijayvanu explained to the king all that happened when he went to the palace and the treatment he received from the Court Physician.

The king felt sad at heart. "The Court Physician is worried more about his own position than my health," he said to himself. "There is hardly anyone who is really faithful to me."

The king then revealed his identity and said, "Vijayvanu, I am very happy with your ability and I want to appoint you as my

chief physician. Tomorrow I shall send a chariot for you and you shall come and live in the palatial house that will be allotted to you!"

"My lord, I'm extremely fortunate to have been of service to you. My great wish has been fulfilled. But, pardon me for saying that I cannot accept the post and the position offered so kindly by Your Majesty."

The king was surprised. "Why?" he asked.

"My lord, if I come to the palace and become your chief physician, then I shall have to look after only your health and that of the members of the royal







family. What will happen to the poor people who depend on me?"

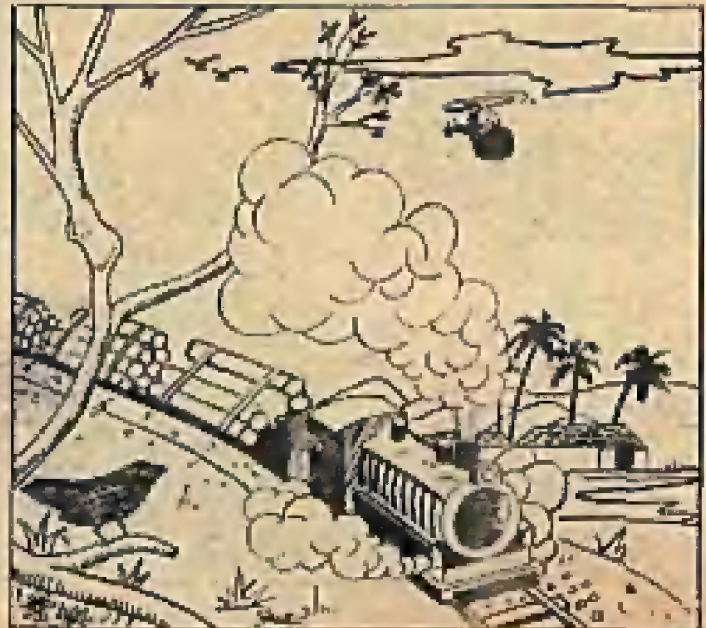
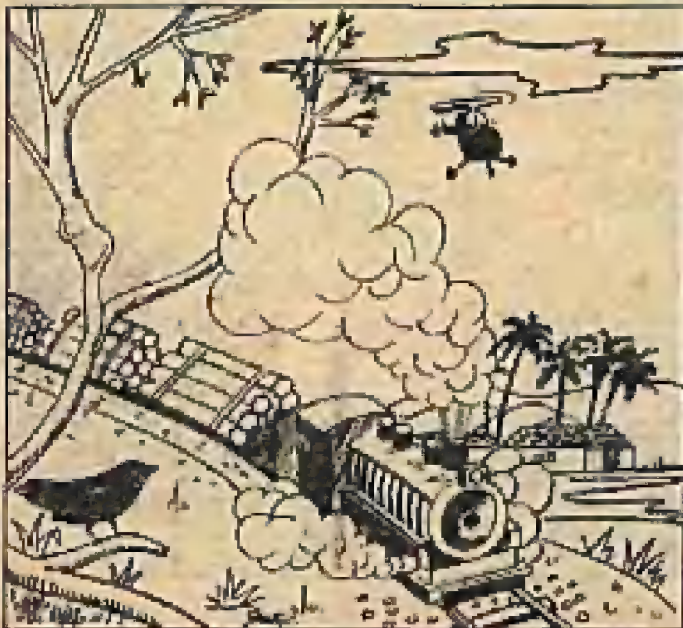
The king realised that Vijayvanu was not only a great physician but also a deep lover of humanity. He said, "My friend, I appreciate your point of view. You are a true physician. I shall have a big hospital constructed for you here itself

so that you could be of service to a greater number of people. Is that all right?"

Vijayvanu was overjoyed. Bowing down, he replied, "My lord, that has been my dream. I shall be ever grateful to you for that."

And, within a year a beautiful hospital was constructed and Vijayvanu took its charge.

## SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES





# ALL WITH HORSE

"Grandpa, I joined the town football team today. The Mayor referred to me as a dark horse. My friend said that he was critical of my ability. Was he?" asked Rajesh.

"No, he was neither critical nor appreciative. In a race a horse whose capability is not known is called a dark horse. The expression extends to human beings. A player can be referred to as a dark horse if his merits are not yet established," replied Grandpa Chowdhury.

"With Rajesh the match is going to be a horseplay and it is going to raise a horse-laugh," commented Reena.

"What d'you mean?" demanded Rajesh.

"She does not mean what she says, I'm sure. Horseplay is a rough, boisterous play. Horse-laugh is a coarse laugh."

"In other words, Rajesh, you have enough horse sense to refrain from behaving madly in the playground," cut in Reena.

"How dare you attribute horse sense to me!"

"Don't you worry, Rajesh," came Grandpa's intervention. "Horse sense means plain common sense. The horse has enriched the English vocabulary in many ways. A popular and old proverb is, 'You can take a horse to the water but you cannot make him drink.' Can you say what this means?"

"Yes. You cannot induce someone to proceed in the desired direction beyond a certain point unless he consents to proceed," answered Rajesh.

"Any other significant phrase or proverb with horses, Grandpa?" asked Reena.

"There are so many. I'll tell you of them in the evening."







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Soft and creamy, like Swiss chocolates ...



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## DID YOU KNOW?



A young American named John Banvard set out on Mississippi river on a boat. As he rowed, he also stopped from time to time and sketched the scenery. He put colour to his sketches after his grand voyage from the mouth of the river to New Orleans was over. It was on a canvas 16,000 feet long and 12 feet wide—the world's longest painting!

The 12th century Japanese Emperor, Sutoku, copied a Buddhist book in 135 pages using a red 'ink' that was his own blood!



In 1913 Albania had no king. A prince was to come from the Turkish royal family to adorn the vacant throne.

The 'prince' arrived and was coronated. He ruled merrily for four days. On the 5th day it was discovered that the real prince was still in Turkey! By the time the prime minister rushed into the palace to confront the imposter, he had vanished! He was a circus joker!

During the French Revolution (1789) the people of the province of Vandeé stood firmly for the royal family that had been overthrown. Their greatest leader was Renee Bordereau. She had taken a vow to defeat the revolutionaries because they killed her father before her eyes. Dressed like a man as Joan of Arc did, she fought 200 battles, never shrinking from dangers.







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PIN: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

**1.** Paste your word or words here. Use one box for each letter of the word or words you make. If you are making the words 'PARLE POPPINS', leave one blank box between 'PARLE' and 'POPPINS'.

My child/ward and I agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the Contest, as printed above.

**2.** Now, on this blank outline, use crayons or colour pencils to make your drawing of the PARLE POPPINS wrapper.

Signature of child's parent/legal guardian

Further details and more entry forms at your favourite store.

Hurry! Contest closes on 30th September 1985!!

Mail your entries to:

The Poppins

Spell-A-Prize Contest,

P.O. Box No. 8273,

Bombay-400 049.



## PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



M.C. Morabad



M. Natarajan

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail it to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs. 50/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

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The Prize for July '85 goes to:—

Miss. Ruby Hope

11/1B Nakuleshwar Bhattecharjee Lane, Calcutta 700 026

The Winning Entry:— 'Noisy Obstacle' & 'Admirable Spectacle'

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## PICKS FROM THE WISE

The one cruel fact about heroes is that they are made of flesh and blood.

—Henry Arthur Jones

The defects of great men are the consolation of dunces.

—Isaac D'Israeli

I have made mistakes, but I have never made the mistake of claiming that I never made one.

—James Gordon Bennett



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Yet protecting the fabric to prolong its newness: keeping every shirt, every sheet as fresh, as clean, as white as new.

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How can that be?  
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